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Front Matter, Editor's Note, Table of Contents

Editorial Staff

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New Jersey English Journal

2014 Issue

New Jersey English Journal is a peer-reviewed publication of the New Jersey Council of Teachers of English (NJCTE). This journal is intended to serve our members through the sharing and showcasing of research, best practices and ideas related to K-12 English Language Arts education.

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CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

2015 Issue of New Jersey English Journal:

The Role of ASSESSMENT in English Language Arts

New Jersey English Journal, a peer-reviewed publication of The New Jersey Council of Teachers of English, invites you to share submissions on “The Role of Assessment.” We seek researched articles as well as personal essays and other creative responses that shed light on the many possibilities, topics, issues, problems and solutions related to assessment. Articles should relate directly to English Language Arts teaching and learning.

We invite you to respond to the theme of “The Role of Assessment” by considering such questions as:

- How can educators use assessment to foster learning?
- What role should, and can, assessment play in student learning?
- What types of assessment do you find to be particularly effective?
- What is the role of formative assessment?
- What is the role of summative assessment?
- When and how should assessment drive curriculum and learning?
- When is assessment helpful, and when is it harmful?
- Is assessment an important component of student learning?
- What is the value of self-assessment and/or of peer assessment, for educators and/or students?
- How might Common Core State Standards-based assessments (i.e., PARCC, Smarter Balanced) impact teaching practices and/or student learning?
- What about teacher assessment – and/or the impact of student assessment data in teacher evaluation?
- How can teachers and/or students make use of assessment data?
- What are the values of objective and subjective assessment?

In addition to submissions that respond to the theme, we also welcome general submissions and poetry. Submissions will be accepted between April 1 and **December 15, 2014**. Submissions must use MLA formatting. All submissions will be reviewed by multiple members of our editorial board. Submitters will receive a response by February 1, 2015; journal will be released by April 1, 2015. Send queries and submissions to journal editor Dana Maloney: dana.maloney@gmail.com.

Dana H. Maloney

From the Editor

Here's a story that might sound vaguely familiar: Once upon a time, some students came into an English Language Arts classroom equipped with their notebooks, pens and textbooks. They sat in rows of desks while the teacher stood in the front of the room and led them all through a series of questions designed to elucidate the meaning of a text. The teacher wrote on the chalkboard, and the students dutifully recorded those notes in their notebooks, their attention fixed for the duration of the lesson. They all lived happily ever after.

For many teachers, that classroom scenario might have always been a fairy tale or even, based on your pedagogy, a bad dream. In today's world, it is surely becoming for most "past practice" and might even be considered "bad practice." So many elements in our world, in education and in the students themselves have prompted a new classroom, one where students play a more active role and where the teacher guides; where wireless digital communication brings connectivity to all members of the room; where the world and its resources are literally accessible via everyone's fingertips; and where the classroom walls extend into the digital environment and outside the school day.

For this issue, we asked you to share with us your thoughts, practices and research regarding the classroom. Keeping with our theme of "The Classroom and Beyond," we are pleased to share with you a wonderful collection of writing from educators in New Jersey . . . and beyond.

These articles, essays and poems you will read in this issue allow you see many views on the classroom today, some of them perhaps eternal elements of the classroom: the teacher-student relationship, the classroom community, and the human exchanges that provoke thought, emotion and even laughter. You will also see the ways in which the classroom is in flux: walls made permeable via technology; students collaborating and connecting with others; student-centered learning practices; teachers and students using social media to connect with others in the world; changing culture in the classroom; and connection to the world.

Coincidentally, but true to the changed role of the single teacher instructing a group of students, many of our writers chose to collaborate in their practices, research and in their writing of articles.

The first group of articles allow us to see how the writers are redefining what happens in the classroom – the classroom as a place of meaningful and relevant learning, with greater independence and opportunities for personalized learning. What might previously have been a place of moving in step, led by the teacher, is now as a place of independent learning.. You will read about how our writers envision and implement practices of reading communities; inquiry-based learning; and reading to understand – and to connect with – other disciplines, history and the world, particularly through the use of informational text.

Participation of students in the classroom and the world (what Goldberg calls "participatory culture") emerges as a theme across the articles that follow, in which the writers redefine student connections with the world: how students connect with the world, and even how they impact the world. Social justice issues and global competencies direct student learning.

Jerry Weiss dispels conceptions that the classroom walls were ever truly solid, as he once more shares his thoughts about the ways in which young adult literature can help readers explore not only imagination but also the self, others and the world.

Our "General Interest" pieces allow you to consider the role of the teacher in the classroom. The essays and poems in that section convey voices of teachers and, again, remind us of why we have the classroom: to offer an environment where we can help young people learn and grow.

Great thanks to all the people who put so much time into the preparation of this issue, including our contributors., the members of the journal editorial board, members of the NJCTE Executive Committee and everyone else who helped behind the scenes. And how about the cover, designed by Tomer Aberbach? Great job, Tomer!

We hope you readers enjoy all the pieces in this issue, and we encourage you to be prompted to write for our 2015 issue, "The Role of Assessment." See our Call for Manuscripts, at left. We would love to publish your writing here next year!

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Dana H. Maloney

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COVER DESIGN by Tomer Aberbach for *New Jersey English Journal*. Tomer is a sophomore at Tenafly High School.